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A Spring Ritual

Jerry Harp*

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A SPRING RITUAL

Jerry Harp

During this warming time of year
We'd congregate on lawns at night
As early fireflies appeared,
Drifting into the grass and heights

Of trees we yelled beneath. We ran
To grab the earthen sparks from air
To put them into jars with grass
And Watch them flashing there

In lanterns parents let us keep
Beside our beds like dry remarks
Launching us on desultory trips
Into our thin, unquiet darks.

Arrayed, restrained, they flickered there.
By morning, to no one's surprise,
They'd left behind no tangible ash,
But lay like blind, unlidded eyes.